A U M

We can never have right relationship with others until our thoughts of others express that relationship.
—N. Sri Ram

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CYCLE OF RECAPITULATION

THERE is a sense in which the present period of history seems to be repeating the past in a tired and aimless way, although in some instances it is fair to say that there are areas of the world which are only now being "brought up to date." This latter process might be thought of as going on wherever there are nationalist movements for political independence of old colonial forms. It is certain, however, that the twentieth century has seen a recrudescence of ancient barbarisms, to which has been added fanatical self-justification on ideological grounds. The horrors growing out of these strange atavisms have made many men question the very basis of our civilization, while others are moved to some kind of withdrawal from active life, suffering a paralysis of the will.

Our historical past seems spread out before us, offering the individual opportunity to live in whatever century he wishes to choose—somewhat as the time-machine writers of the science-fiction genre have suggested. We might think of this array of circumstances as an external correspondence of the extreme self-consciousness of the age, taken together with the strong sense of history which typifies Western civilization. It is as though the times now say to us: This is what we have been, what we have done, what we are. And it is natural for men to question: Are we indeed this, and if we are, is there a dignity in human life?

Odd and disconcerting currents appear in modern literature. We are familiar enough with the extreme pessimism of the novel which portrays the hopelessness of modern man held tight in the clutch of circumstance; and we have learned to value the desperate heroism of the exis-

tentialist protagonist who declares his manhood against what seems to him the dead weight of an alien universe. What is perhaps new is the taking up of old themes in a new light, such as, for example, Anouilh's drama of Thomas à Becket and his struggle with Henry II. Becket is plainly Anouilh's hero, and yet more than this, *man* is Becket's hero, the man in Becket and the man in Henry. The play is not a chronicle of the struggle between good men and bad men, but an examination of the human situation and the forms taken by the good and evil in all men, under the pressure of institutions and the ambitions which rise in the human breast. Anouilh has in common with Dostoevsky the capacity to inspire compassion for all his characters, who are richly human before they are good and evil, right or wrong.

This is a new learning of the meaning of history, promising a new vigor for the theatre of tomorrow; but of more importance is the fact that such a play could not have been written without a hungering audience for the kind of examination of life which it affords. *Men,* not institutions, shine in this play; institutions are the weights they wear about their neck, in trying to find their way, to be true—Becket to his light, Henry to his heart. There is a deep brotherhood in this theme, neglectful and contemptuous of the harsh angers of politics and the righteous progress of systems and institutions.

Indeed, the rediscovery of man is a theme that is in the air. This was the prophecy, the ringing doctrine of H.P.B. in the closing years of the nineteenth century. It was given in terms of abstractions, for the realities of philosophy are the abstractions of ordinary life; but now, as the decades go by, we find the flesh and blood of existence giving these abstractions embodiment, and the anticipations of the Five Messages to the American Theosophists taking on a meaning that we could hardly have imagined a generation ago. Ours is an age of recapitulation, of stock-taking, and of new beginnings, even in the midst of tensions which may be compared to the field of Kurukshetra. The future can hardly be predicted, but the longings of men to know themselves more truly can at least be recognized as they find forms of expression. Thus may be created the matrices of a new conception of human possibility, the dust and ashes of the past serving once again to nourish the birth that is to come.

TO THE READERS OF LUCIFER

The opening editorial of H. P. Blavatsky's magazine *Lucifer* (see June THEOSOPHY) was the battle-cry of "the fighting, combative *Manas*." Subsequent issues of *Lucifer* kept up a steady fire with "The Signs of the Times," "Origin of Evil," "Let Every Man Prove His Own Work," "The Esoteric Character of the Gospels," "From the Notebook of an Unpopular Philosopher," and "*Lucifer* to the Archbishop of Canterbury" (last reprinted in THEOSOPHY 49:389). These articles challenged the spiritualists: "the time for phenomena with, or through mediums, whether professional or otherwise, is gone by"; examined philosophically the pessimism of the times (remarkably like the twentieth-century variety); discussed the psychology of social reform and its limitations, repudiated exoteric and dogmatic Christianity as contrary to the spirit of the Gospels themselves; held up to ridicule the social hypocrisies "accepted" in the best circles; and finally, in an open letter to the Lord Primate of all England, asked the official state church to answer for the conditions under which the citizens of a joint "spiritual" and temporal government were forced to live.

Gerald Massey, reviewing a book on blood-covenanting, evidently offended some readers (as intimated by H.P.B. in the present reprint). But the key to Massey's dead-letter materialism had been suggested in two Editor's notes attached to the article, the first stating that " 'Blood' is the *principle* of the Body," and that Atma is "the light and life in man, as the physical sun is the light and life of our solar system." In the second note, H.P.B. takes exception to the conclusions of "strict scholarship," and remarks: "The arcane doctrine teaches that the 'blood' rites are as old as the Third Root-race, being established in their final form by the Fourth Parent race in commemoration of the separation of androgynous mankind, their forefathers, into males and females."

A study of Tolstoi's philosophy also appeared, "The Science of Life" (see THEOSOPHY 43:245), and the December, 1887, issue contained several correlations between theosophical ideas and dominant "philosophies" in Western Culture: "Emerson and Occultism," "Theosophy and Socialism," and "An Infant Genius" (on Josef Hofmann, ten-year-old musical prodigy). "The Spirit of Healing" observed that the power to heal body or soul cannot be "sold for money or bartered

for wealth or fame," and commended the practice of Count Mattei, a homeopathic pioneer.

The cumulative effect of these articles, which—together with mystic or occult tales and simpler statements of theosophical ideas—appeared in the short space of four months, can only be imagined. Inevitably, the stirring of ideas provoked bitterness as well as gratitude, and soon there began to be heard the "mighty roaring voice of denunciation, so welcome to those whose little spites and hates and mental stagnation in the grasp of the social respectability it panders to." The first issue's statement of policy was therefore supplemented, five months later (January, 1888), by a lead article addressed "To the Readers of 'Lucifer'," which is here reprinted for the second time.—Editors THEOSOPHY.

OUR magazine is only four numbers old, and already its young life is full of cares and trouble. This is all as it should be; *i.e.*, like every other publication, it must fail to satisfy *all* its readers, and this is only in the nature of things and the destiny of every printed organ. But what seems a little strange in a country of culture and free thought is that *Lucifer* should receive such a number of *anonymous,* spiteful, and often abusive letters. This, of course, is but a casual remark, the waste-basket in the office being the only addressee and sufferer in this case; yet it suggests strange truths with regard to human nature.[1]

Sincerity is true wisdom, it appears, only to the mind of the moral philosopher. It is rudeness and insult to him who regards dissimulation and deceit as culture and politeness, and holds that the shortest, easiest, and safest way to success is to let sleeping dogs and old customs alone. But, if the dogs are obstructing the highway to progress and truth, and Society will, as a rule, reject the wise words of (St.) Augustine, who recommends that "no man should prefer custom before reason and truth," is it a sufficient cause for the philanthropist to walk out of, or even deviate from, the track of truth, because the selfish egoist chooses to do so? Very true, as remarked somewhere by Sir Thomas Browne, that not every man is a proper champion for the truth, nor fit to take up the gauntlet in its cause. Too many of such defenders are apt, from inconsideration and too much zeal, to charge the troops of error so

[1] "VERBUM SAP." It is not our intention to notice anonymous communications, even though they should emanate in a round-about way from Lambeth Palace. The matter *"Verbum Sap"* refers to is not one of taste; the facts must be held responsible for the offence; and, as the Scripture hath it, "Woe to them by whom the offence cometh!"

rashly that they "remain themselves as trophies to the enemies of truth." Nor ought all of us (members of the Theosophical Society) to do so personally, but rather leave it only to those among our numbers who have voluntarily and beforehand sacrificed their personalities for the cause of Truth. Thus teaches us one of the Masters of Wisdom in some fragments of advice which are published further on for the benefit of the Theosophists (see the article that follows this[2]). While enforcing upon such public characters in our ranks as editors, and lecturers, etc., the duty of telling fearlessly "the Truth to the face of LIE," he yet condemns the habit of private judgment and criticism in every individual Theosophist.

Unfortunately, these are not the ways of the public and readers. Since our journal is entirely unsectarian, since it is neither theistic nor atheistic, Pagan nor Christian, orthodox nor heterodox, therefore, its editors discover eternal verities in the most opposite religious systems and modes of thought. Thus *Lucifer* fails to give full satisfaction to either infidel or Christian. In sight of the former—whether he be an Agnostic, a Secularist, or an Idealist—to find divine or occult lore underlying "the rubbish" in the Jewish Bible and Christian Gospels is sickening; in the opinion of the latter, to recognise the same truth as in the Judeo-Christian Scriptures in the Hindu, Parsi, Buddhist, or Egyptian religious literature, is vexation of spirit and blasphemy. Hence, fierce criticism from both sides, sneers and abuse. Each party would have us on its own sectarian side, recognising as truth, only that which its particular *ism* does.

But this cannot nor shall it be. Our motto was from the first, and ever shall be: "THERE IS NO RELIGION HIGHER THAN—TRUTH." Truth we search for, and, once found, we bring it forward before the world, whencesoever it comes. A large majority of our teachers is fully satisfied with this our policy, and that is plainly sufficient for our purposes.

It is evident that when toleration is not the outcome of indifference it must arise from wide-spreading charity and large-minded sympathy. Intolerance is pre-eminently the consequence of ignorance and jealousy. He who fondly believes that he has got the great ocean in his family water-jug is naturally intolerant of his neighbour, who also is pleased to imagine that he has poured the broad expanse of the sea of truth into his own particular pitcher. But anyone who, like the Theosophists, knows how infinite is that ocean of eternal wisdom, to be

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[2] "Some Words on Daily Life" (reprinted in THEOSOPHY 33:177).—Eds.

fathomed by no one man, class, or party, and realizes how little the largest vessel made by man contains in comparison to what lies dormant and still unperceived in its dark, bottomless depths, cannot help but be tolerant. For he sees that others have filled their little water-jugs at the same great reservoir in which he has dipped his own, and if the water in the various pitchers seems different to the eye, it can only be because it is discoloured by impurities that were in the vessel before the pure crystalline element—a portion of the one eternal and immutable truth—entered into it.

There is, and can be, but one absolute truth in Kosmos. And little as we, with our present limitations, can understand it in its essence, we still know that if it is absolute it must also be omnipresent and universal; and that in such case, it must be underlying every world-religion—the product of the thought and knowledge of numberless generations of thinking men. Therefore, that a portion of truth, great or small, is found in every religious and philosophical system, and that if we would find it, we have to search for it at the origin and source of every such system, at its roots and first growth, not in its later overgrowth of sects and dogmatism. Our object is not to destroy any religion but rather to help to filter each, thus ridding them of their respective impurities. In this we are opposed by all those who maintain, against evidence, that their particular pitcher alone contains the whole ocean. How is our great work to be done if we are to be impeded and harassed on every side by partisans and zealots? It would be already half accomplished were the intelligent men, at least, of every sect and system, to feel and to confess that the little wee bit of truth they themselves own must necessarily be mingled with error, and that their neighbours' mistakes are, like their own, mixed with truth.

Free discussion, temperate, candid, undefiled by personalities and animosity, is, we think, the most efficacious means of getting rid of error and bringing out the underlying truth; and this applies to publications as well as to persons. It is open to a magazine to be tolerant or intolerant; it is open to it to err in almost every way in which an individual can err; and since every publication of the kind has a responsibility such as falls to the lot of few individuals, it behooves it to be ever on its guard so that it may advance without fear and without reproach. All this is true in a special degree in the case of a theosophical publication, and *Lucifer* feels that it would be unworthy of that designation

were it not true to the profession of the broadest tolerance and catholicity, even while pointing out to its brothers and neighbours the errors which they indulge in and follow. While thus keeping strictly, in its editorials, and in articles by its individual editors, to the spirit and teachings of pure theosophy, it nevertheless frequently gives room to articles and letters which diverge widely from the esoteric teachings accepted by the editors, as also by the majority of theosophists. Readers, therefore, who are accustomed to find in magazines and party publications only such opinions and arguments as the editor believes to be unmistakably orthodox—from his peculiar standpoint—must not condemn any article in *Lucifer* with which they are not entirely in accord, or in which expressions are used that may be offensive from a sectarian or a *prudish* point of view, on the ground that such are unfitted for a theosophical magazine. They should remember that precisely because *Lucifer* is a theosophical magazine, it opens its columns to writers whose views of life and things may not only slightly differ from its own, but even be diametrically opposed to the opinion of the editors. The object of the latter is to elicit truth, not to advance the interest of any particular *ism,* or to pander to any hobbies, likes or dislikes, of any class of readers. It is only snobs and prigs who, disregarding the truth or error of the idea, cavil and strain merely over the expressions and words it is couched in.

Theosophy, if meaning anything, means truth; and truth has to deal indiscriminately and in the same spirit of impartiality with vessels of honour and of dishonour alike. No theosophical publication would ever dream of adopting the coarse—or shall we say terribly sincere—language of a Hosea or a Jeremiah; yet so long as those holy prophets are found in the Christian Bible, and the Bible is in every respectable, pious family, whether aristocratic or plebeian; and so long as the Bible is read with bowed head and in all reverence by young, innocent maidens and school-boys, why should our Christian critics fall foul of any phrase which may have to be used—if truth be spoken at all—in an occasional article upon a scientific subject? It is to be feared that the same sentences now found objectionable, because referring to Biblical subjects, would be loudly praised and applauded had they been directed against any gentile system of faith (*Vide certain missionary organs*). A little charity, gentle readers—charity, and above all—*fairness* and JUSTICE.

Justice demands that when the reader comes across an article in this magazine which does not immediately approve itself to his mind by chiming in with his own peculiar ideas, he should regard it as a problem to solve rather than as a mere subject of criticism. Let him endeavour to learn the lesson which only opinions differing from his own can teach him. *Let him be tolerant, if not actually charitable,* and postpone his judgment till he extracts from the article the truth it must contain, adding this new acquisition to his store. One ever learns more from one's enemies than from one's friends; and it is only when the reader has credited this hidden truth to *Lucifer,* that he can fairly presume to put what he believes to be the errors of the article he does not like to the debit account.

A PUZZLED COMPLAINT

Friends of *Lucifer* are beginning to find fault. They cannot see *why it should not be a purely Theosophical magazine,* in other words, why it refuses to be dogmatic and bigoted. Instead of devoting every square inch of space to theosophical and occult teachings, it opens its pages "to the publication of the most grotesquely heterogeneous elements and conflicting doctrines." This is the chief accusation, to which we answer —why not? Every *true* fact, every sincere word are part and parcel of Theosophy. One who is skilled in divine alchemy, or even approximately blessed with the gift of the perception of truth, will find and extract it from an erroneous as much as from a correct statement. However small the particle of gold lost in a ton of rubbish, it is the noble metal still, and worthy of being dug out even at the price of some extra trouble. . . . Theosophy allows a hearing and a fair chance to all. It deems no views—if sincere—entirely destitute of truth. It respects thinking men, to whatever class of thought they may belong. Ever ready to oppose ideas and views which can only create confusion without benefiting philosophy, it leaves their expounders personally to believe in whatever they please, and does justice to their ideas when they are good.

—H. P. BLAVATSKY

THE PROMULGATION OF THEOSOPHY

TOO much attention has been paid by several to the opinions of men in the world who have a reputation in science and in scholarship. Their opinions are valuable in their respective fields, but the ideas of the world should not be permitted to dwarf our work or smother our heart's desire. These owners of reputations do not entirely govern the progress of the race.

The great mass of mankind are of the common people, and it is with them we have chiefly to deal. For our message does not come only for the scholar and the scientific man. In spite of scholars, in spite of science, the superstitions of the people live on. And perhaps those very superstitions are the means of preserving to us the almost forgotten truth. Indeed, had we listened only to those learned in books, we would long ago have lost all touch with our real life.

If we believe in our message and in the aim of the Society, we ought never to tire telling the people that which they can understand. And the rich as well as the poor are the people to whom I refer. They need the help of Theosophy, for they are wandering very close to the marshes of materialism. They must have a true ethic, a right philosophy. Tell them of our great doctrines of Karma and Reincarnation. Tell of these with confidence, unshaken by opinions of others, and that confidence of yours will beget confidence in the hearer. Science and exact scholarship are factors in our progress, but although they are important, the mass of the people are more important still. You cannot scientifically prove everything. But if you are sure, as so many of us are, that we are immortal pilgrims, then tell the people plainly and practically how they have been here before in other bodies, and will be here again to suffer or enjoy just as they may have decided in their other life, and they will believe it. They will soon come to that belief because these laws are facts in nature, facts in their real experience. Were I to attend only to scholars, I should be able to do no other work, while all the time my fellow-creatures—not scholars and in the vast majority—would be deprived of the spiritual help it was my duty to give them.

We are really working for the future, laying the foundation for a

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NOTE.—This article is from an address given by Mr. Judge in London, at the close of the European T.S. Convention, July 15, 1892, and was last reprinted in THEOSOPHY for August, 1946.

greater day than this. We are all coming back together to carry on this work if we now take up all our opportunities. We must act from duty now, and thus be right for the future.

Our duty is to recognize the great human soul with which we have to deal and for which we should work. Its progress, its experience, its inner life, are vastly more important than all our boasted civilization. That civilization could easily be swept away, and what would be left? Your country could be frozen up solidly in a few weeks, were the Gulf Stream deflected from these shores. Mines have honeycombed your land, and a good earthquake might easily shake all your material glories to destruction beneath the sea. What then could remain save the human experience, the experience of the soul? But no cataclysm can destroy your thoughts. They live on. And so all the work that you do for the inner life of man can meet with no destruction, even though records and books and all the ingenious works upon this outer plane were swept out of existence. If then you believe in this mighty doctrine of Reincarnation, do not be afraid to tell it.

But do not, as Theosophists, confine yourselves to the intellect. The dry or the interesting speculations upon all the details of cosmogony and anthropology will not save the world. They do not cure sorrow nor appeal to those who feel the grinding stones of fate, and know not why it should be so. Address yourselves therefore to using your intellectual knowledge of these high matters, so as to practically affect the hearts of men.

Our debt to science is very great. It has levelled the barriers and made freedom of thought a possibility. Science is our friend, for without its progress you would now, at the order of the bigot, all be in the common jail. It has combated the strength and cut the claws of bigoted churches. And even those iconoclasts, such as Robert Ingersoll, who often violate the sentiment and ideals of many good men, have helped in this progress, for they have done the tearing down which must precede the building up. It is our place to supply the new structure, for the churches are beginning to find that they must look into subjects which once were kept out of sight. A sign of this was seen at a recent Council of the Methodist Church in America, where their brightest lights declared that they must accept evolution, or they would go down. The only church which does not publicly as yet proclaim on these matters is the Roman Catholic. It is so sly that I should not be surprised ere long to hear of its throwing

its mantle over all our doctrines publicly, and saying that such had always been its doctrine. But if that step be taken it will be the fatal one. So even that need give us no fear.

We are working with and for the great unseen, but actual Brotherhood of Humanity, and in our efforts, if sincere, will have the aid of those our Brothers who have perfected themselves before us and are ever ready to help on the human family. So if we are firmly fixed in that belief, we can never weaken.

I have heard some words about our pretending to be undogmatic, or that our claim to freedom is against the fact. I do not hold such an opinion. Our Society is, as a body, wholly unsectarian. It must always be so. But that does not affect the inevitable result of so many joined in one effort. A large number of us must have come at last to a common belief. This we can boldly say, and at the same time also that no enquirer is obliged to subscribe to those beliefs. For this we have the warrant, not only of our own statutes, but also that of the oft-repeated declarations of H. P. Blavatsky. If I have a belief which works with all the problems that vex us so much, then I will tell it to my fellow who has joined these ranks. If wrong, the interchange of thought will correct me; if right, the truth must at last prevail. In this, Brotherhood means toleration of opinion, and not a fear of declaring the beliefs you hold, nor does that declaration negative in the least the claim to unsectarianism.

This Society is a small germ of a nucleus for a real outer Brotherhood. If we work aright the day must come when we shall have accomplished our aim and formed the nucleus. If we had five hundred members in the Society loving one another with true hearts, not criticizing nor condemning, and all bent on one aim with one belief—we could sweep the whole world with our thoughts. And this is our work in the future, the work traced out for us by those Masters in whom so many of us firmly believe.

If we only have patience, what a glorious, wide, and noble prospect opens up before us!

QUESTION—AND COMMENT

IN connection with explanation of the relation of pure Buddhism to Theosophy, "the doctrine of the Bodhisattvas" has often been referred to. The Bodhisattvas certainly are presented as "Masters of Wisdom," and their appearance is considered to be without beginning or end, thus removing the consideration of Great Beings from some particular locus in history—one of the typical provincialisms of most religions. But, along with the term "Bodhisattva," we also encounter such words of related meaning as "Avatar." Then there is the distinction H.P.B. makes between the Dharmakaya and the Nirmanakaya. All this is very complicated.

And so it should be, we think, for even though H.P.B. in both *Isis Unveiled* and *The Secret Doctrine* at times employed the terms Avatar, Buddha, and Bodhisattva synonymously, she also establishes distinctions in differing contexts. Behind the various uses of these designations lies the basic fact that each term belongs to a stage or degree of awakening of the spiritual man within the physical, and therefore represents, in some degree, ourselves as we endeavor to progress. The kinship of Arjuna and Krishna in *The Bhagavad-Gita* lies precisely in the fact that Arjuna is in *one* sense *already* an incarnation or "Avatar" of Krishna, in another sense an incipient Buddha or Bodhisattva.

Since the question refers to the doctrine of the "Bodhisattvas," let us consider the particular occult significance of this term at it appears in the purest traditions of Mahayana Buddhism: The central theosophical meaning of the story of the Buddha lies in his voluntary forsaking of the bliss of Nirvana—the decision to return from his liberated state on behalf of a toiling and suffering humanity. Theravada Buddhism (Hinayana, or the "lesser vehicle") envisions Gautama as a symbol of a perfection which, once reached, enables the enlightened one to disappear from the realm of men and events forever. But the Bodhisattva is "one who returns" from the heights to voluntary incarnation. Professor Huston Smith in *The Religions of Man* provides an interesting if homely illustration of the difference between the Buddha viewed as "Arhat" and the Buddha viewed as "Bodhisattva":

> For the Theravadins the ideal was the *Arhat,* the perfected disciple who, wandering like the lone rhinoceros, strikes out on his own for

Nirvana and with prodigious concentration makes his way unswervingly toward that pinpointed goal. The Mahayana ideal, on the contrary, was the *Bodhisattva,* "one whose essence (*sattva*) is perfected wisdom (*bodhi*)," a being who, having brought himself to the brink of Nirvana, voluntarily renounces his prize that he may return to the world to make it accessible to others. He deliberately sentences himself to age-long servitude that others, drawing on his acts of supererogation, may enter Nirvana before him. The difference between the two types is illustrated in the story of four men who, journeying across an immense desert, come upon a compound surrounded with high walls. One of the four determines to find out what is inside. He scales the wall and on reaching the top gives a whoop of delight and jumps over. The second and third do likewise. When the fourth man gets to the top of the wall, he sees below him an enchanted garden with sparkling streams, pleasant groves, and delicious fruit. Though longing to jump over, he resists the impulse. Remembering other wayfarers who are trudging the burning deserts, he climbs back down and devotes himself to directing them to the oasis. The first three men were *Arhats,* the last was a *Bodhisattva,* one who vows not to desert this world "until the grass itself be enlightened."

Apparently, one may speak of various degrees of Buddhahood after a certain stage of enlightenment has been reached, so that Gautama, in his conscious determination "to return from the mountain top," so to speak, while still in a physical body, became at that moment a Bodhisattva. Other terms blend with those already mentioned, though, and the student of *The Secret Doctrine* should note a particularly interesting example appearing on page 571 of Volume I. Here H.P.B. establishes a link between the highly abstract conception of the various *Logoi* of creation and specific great spiritual embodiments—writing that "it is the second *logos* of creation from whom emanate the Dhyani Buddhas, called the Anupadaka, 'the parentless'." She continues:

> These Buddhas are the primeval monads from the world of *incorporeal being,* the *Arupa,* wherein the Intelligences (on that plane only) have neither shape nor name, in the exoteric system, but have their distinct seven names in esoteric philosophy. These Dhyani Buddhas emanate, or create from themselves, by virtue of Dhyana, celestial Selves—the *super*-human Bodhisattvas. These incarnating at the beginning of every human cycle on earth as mortal men, become occasionally, owing to their personal merit, Bodhisattvas among the Sons of Humanity, after which they may re-appear as *Manushi* (human) Buddhas. The Anupadaka (or Dhyani-Buddhas) are thus identical with the Brahminical *Manasaputra,* "mind-born sons."

These few sentences indicate that differing terms refer to different aspects of incarnations of high spiritual attainment and that behind *all* the terms lies one of the universal traditions so often referred to in primeval myth and allegory. Joseph Campbell in *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* establishes the connection between the universal mythos and the aspirations of individual man, in this or any other age:

> The archetypes to be discovered and assimilated are precisely those that have inspired, throughout the annals of human culture, the basic images of ritual, mythology, and vision. The hero is the man or woman who has been able to battle past his personal and local historical limitations to the generally valid, normally human forms. Such a one's visions, ideas, and inspirations come pristine from the primary springs of human life and thought. Hence they are eloquent, not of the present, disintegrating society and psyche, but of the unquenched source through which society is reborn. The hero has died as a modern man; but as eternal man—perfected, unspecific, universal man—he has been reborn. His second solemn task and deed therefore is to return then to us, transfigured, and teach the lesson he has learned of life renewed.

All religions, as Campbell shows, teach this "myth," which involves both the state of Nirvana, the state of the Buddha on the way to becoming a Bodhisattva, and the Bodhisattva himself.

The word "Avatar" simply indicates an incarnation, usually a "divine" incarnation, but even in this latter sense applies to every human soul returning from a glimpse of the timeless vision before birth into a new life amidst material complexities. In the Indian ethos this is symbolized by the fact that Krishna was said to be an Avatar of the God Vishnu, a special incarnation of a Being of exalted power. But by the same token, every race is an "avatar" or incarnation, and it is this aspect of the ancient legends that H.P.B. takes up, in Volume II of *The Secret Doctrine,* under the heading "The Gods of Light Proceed from the Gods of Darkness":

> It is pretty well established that Christ, the Logos, or the God in Space and the Saviour on Earth, is but one of the echoes of antediluvian and sorely misunderstood Wisdom. The history begins by the descent on Earth of the "Gods" who incarnate in mankind, and this is the FALL. Whether Brahmâ hurled down on Earth in the allegory by Bhagavant, or Jupiter by Kronos, all are the symbols of the human races. Once landed on, and having touched this planet of dense matter, no snow-white wings of the highest angel can remain immaculate, or the *Avatar* (or incarnation) be perfect, as every such Avatar is the fall

> of a God into generation. Nowhere is the metaphysical truth more clear, when explained esoterically, or more hidden from the average comprehension of those who instead of appreciating the sublimity of the idea can only degrade, than in the *Upanishads,* the esoteric glossaries of the Vedas.
>
> Yet the metaphorical FALL, and as metaphorical atonement and crucifixion, led Western Humanity through roads knee-deep in blood. Worse than all, they led it to believe in the dogma of the evil spirit distinct from the spirit of all good, whereas the former lives in all matter and preëminently in man.

Of course it is not only in Western religious myths and allegories that we find confusions or differing interpretations of an original doctrine. In *The Theosophical Glossary* we learn that in *popular* modern Buddhism the attainment of the Dharmakaya vesture is the greatest of all attainments for the ascetic, since it places him on the threshold of Nirvana. But in H.P.B.'s *Voice of the Silence* we find again emphasis upon the highest state, as comprising a recognition that return to earth is the determination of the greatest beings. A footnote on page 69 of the *Voice* speaks of an interpretation: "Where the doctrine of *Nirmanakayas*—those *Bodhisattvas* who renounce well-earned Nirvana or the *Dharmakaya* vesture (both of which shut them out forever from the world of men) in order to invisibly assist mankind and lead it finally to Paranirvana—is taught, every new *Bodhisattva,* or initiated great Adept, is called the 'liberator of mankind'." The Nirmanakaya, in other words, has developed all the ingredients of the Dharmakaya vesture and yet not entered into it, remaining instead, "bodiless," but determined to work for the liberation of all human beings. One who assumes the Dharmakaya vesture, however, accepts it as that cosmos which he has won for himself after countless sacrifices and disciplines; he is then no longer connected with the humanity of our cycle. Like the devachanee, he is unreachable and unreaching until the whole karmic period with which he is identified comes to an end.

On this basis we can establish a rather close kinship between ourselves and the Dharmakaya who declines incarnation, for do not nearly all representatives of contemporary humanity hold back from a full "incarnation" into the responsibilities which their higher spiritual intuitions reveal from time to time?

MISUNDERSTOOD BIBLICAL TRADITIONS

Prayer—I

WERE it possible to stand aside from the stream of human life and view its vicissitudes impersonally—as spectator or as soul—it would probably be seen that one of the greatest problems of this time is that of keeping alive in man his spiritual intuitions. Due to the materializing influence of *Kali Yuga,* or the Dark Age, which began according to Hindu chronology about five thousand years ago, man's innate feelings about God, Justice, Miracle, Salvation and Prayer, are subject almost daily to attack—not so much from persons, creeds or organized bodies of iconoclasts, perhaps, as from the spirit and outlook of the age. Not one cherished belief has escaped the hand of time.

Who would be so bold as to affirm, for example, that the meaning of the term *God,* as understood and taught by organized religion today, is the same as that given by Zoroaster, Krishna, or Christ? Who would have the temerity to contend that the theoretical interpretations of *miracle,* as read about and discussed in Sunday School, are anything like the truth concerning that vast science of magic known and practiced by Elijah, Peter and Paul? Or that *prayer,* as conceived throughout Christendom in the twentieth century, bears even a close approximation to the inward communion recommended by Jesus to his disciples, wherein, "All things whatsoever ye pray and ask for . . . ye shall have them"? An eminent theologian, when asked in the latter years of his life: "Do you believe in God?" replied that "The question requires not an answer, but an education." May not the same thing be said also of prayer—that is, that men need to re-educate themselves, lest the meaning and spirit of the ancient practice be lost?

"Prove all things; hold fast that which is good," said St. Paul. ". . . be not children in understanding: howbeit in malice be ye children, but in understanding be men." In spite of these and other exhortations to mental and spiritual acumen, most adherents of the faith seem to have fallen under the spell, or the inertia, of what St. Paul called the "outward man." Too many, it would appear, have been content *to believe only,* to follow blindly what other men say or do, instead of seeing to it that "the inward man is renewed day by day." (2 Cor. 4:16). Too many of us have taken it for granted that because we have made the terms God,

Christ, Spirit, Soul and Prayer intimate and workable parts of our vocabularies, we thereby understand all that these words imply—and this is probably a great mistake. The ability to name a thing can hardly mean that one knows all about it. The terms God and Christ are only points of departure, the first steps perhaps on an endless journey of exploration, a search and discovery of the universe that leads almost to infinity. Progress on this path can proceed day by day only by self-induced and self-devised exertions, by a process of thinking and of evaluation that proceeds from within. One of the chief functions of the Theosophical Movement of this age is to stimulate such independent thought, to encourage men to hark back to origins or to principles—and thus to rescue from degradation the kernels of truth underlying the religious doctrines of old.

> For the Esoteric philosophy is alone calculated to withstand, in this age of crass and illogical materialism, the repeated attacks on all and everything man holds most dear and sacred, in his inner spiritual life (H. P. Blavatsky).

But how, one may ask, is the nugget of truth in each instance to be unearthed? How is the tarnish of the ages to be removed, and in such a manner that the jewel itself shall suffer no harm? Can the devout Christian or Jew, born and bred under the tutelage of church and synagogue ritualism, be convinced that his concept of God, as an *outside* personal Being, and of prayer based on that concept, may be false—without sowing in his mind the unwholesome seed of materialism? How are any of the great ideas to be stripped of their outward human garb without giving the impression that the ideas themselves are being attacked or even destroyed? Fortunately, in the case of *prayer,* the sincere Christian has but to search the words and practices of his own Master to convince himself that the custom, at least as an outward public observance, is a questionable one, and that the whole subject ought to be re-examined, tested and proved.

"Lord, teach us to pray," says one of the disciples in Luke 11. 1. In response, Jesus offers, as an example, what is familiarly known as *The Lord's Prayer.* In Matt. 6. 5-13, another version of this same prayer is given, except in the latter account the instructions on how to pray are somewhat more definite and complete.

> And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the

> streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward.
>
> But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly.
>
> But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking.
>
> Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him.
>
> After this manner therefore pray ye . . .

Then follows the Lord's Prayer, which, in spite of the Master's warning against "vain repetitions," has probably been memorized and repeated more times per capita of the total church membership than any other section of the New Testament. Was it the intention of Jesus that either the disciples, or the millions of human beings he must have known would follow, should henceforth repeat the words of this prayer verbatim?

Jesus, as even a cursory acquaintance with the four Gospels will disclose, was not favorably disposed toward some of the teachings and customs of the day in which he lived. "Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time," thus-and-so, "but I say unto you" the opposite. Public prayer, as an outward petition to an anthropomorphic God as the addressee, was inaugurated by the Jews and popularized by the Pharisees. But Jesus himself neither followed nor advocated the practice. How many Christians have demanded of their leaders an answer to the question of why it was that Jesus never prayed before the multitudes, as do the priests and clergymen of our day—but rather, "when he had sent the multitudes away, he went up into a mountain apart to pray: and when the evening was come, he was there alone"? (Matt. 14. 23). Why, at the place called Gethsemane, did he thrice leave the company of others and go off by himself to pray? "Sit ye here," he said to his disciples, "while I go and pray yonder." (Matt. 26. 36-44). Why, at the Mount of Olives, when his disciples were following him, did he withdraw himself "from them about a stone's cast, and kneeled down, and prayed?"* (Lu. 22. 39-41).

Moreover, when the Master preached and taught in the synagogues,

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* The following article lists over a dozen instances from the Gospels in which the Master is shown to have excused himself from the presence of others, even from the company of his disciples, before praying.

as at Nazareth, Galilee and Capernaum (Lu. 4), no mention whatsoever is made of his having prayed in either of these temples—or in any other, for that matter—nor did he offer supplications or proclaim benedictions of any kind when he spoke to the people at the Lake of Gennesaret (Lu. 5. 1-4). Why, also, did Jesus not *say grace* when he sat down to the great feast in the house of Levi? (Lu. 5. 29-33). Indeed, on this latter occasion, the Master was questioned by the publicans on this very point of prayer: "Why do the disciples of John fast often, and make prayers, and likewise the disciples of the Pharisees; but thine eat and drink?" What else can this mean but that the disciples of Jesus, evidently following the injunctions of their Master, were never seen to be praying in public?

Only on one occasion does Jesus seem to have prayed in the company of others, and this in the presence of the disciples only, just prior to his betrayal and death (John 17). But in this farewell address, he explained why he thus prayed openly. "These things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves . . . Neither pray I for these alone, but . . . that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and has loved them, as thou hast loved me." On three other occasions, in utterances of not more than two sentences each, he gave thanks to the Father, as at the tomb of Lazarus (if we wish to call these prayers)—but even here he gave his reason for speaking openly (John 11. 41-42).*

The question now to be considered is why Jesus was so adamant, both in precept and in practice, against praying in public and in the synagogues? Surely, every religious man who prayed in public was not a hypocrite or a liar, so he must have had a reason—the same reason, no doubt, that prompted H. P. Blavatsky, as a messenger from the Lodge of Masters in this age, to issue similar warning. And that is that prayer, in any of its forms, is a double-edged sword, a dangerous art, which, depending upon its use, may become either a blessing or a curse.

But, it will be asked: Did not Solomon pray in the temple, and is it not recorded that David prayed to the Lord of Hosts to help him smite the Phillistines, and slay the Syrians and the Moabites, and that "the Lord preserved David whithersoever he went?" So it is recorded, but since Western peoples delight in calling themselves Christians, why

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* It should be remembered that *the Lord's Prayer,* so-called, was not a real prayer, but *a manner of praying,* suggested by Jesus to his disciples in response to their request for instructions on how to pray (Matt. 6. 9; Lu. 11. 1-2).

should they not rather follow that which Christ says? And he distinctly commands that we follow not "them of old times," or the Mosaic law, but bids us do as he says.

According to the principle of *duality* which pervades the whole of the manifested universe, everything has two sides to it. Fire is both life-giving and death-dealing; water both constructs and destroys; the brilliant rays of the Sun may either heal or kill. None of these natural elements possesses any quality of itself. It becomes beneficent or maleficent according to the wisdom with which it is used. So it is, no doubt, with the practice called *prayer*—it may be good or bad, depending upon how prayer is defined and the way it is used. Might this be one reason why the disciples felt the need for instructions on how to pray? *Demon est Deus inversus.*

The sincere Christian may demur, perhaps, to statements such as these, and say that not only he and his family, but also his parents and their predecessors, have prayed devotedly throughout the whole of their lives—with nothing but good results. "Prayer," he will affirm, "has been an essential part of our religious lives, an inexhaustible source of strength in time of need." All of which may seem to be perfectly true. But are we to ignore the equally true fact that tragedies do occur in praying families? And are we to close our eyes to the truth that many good people who never pray are equally blessed, along with their Christian brothers, with victory, wealth and peace of mind and heart?

Human nature, it seems fair to observe, is likely to be a little one-sided, or prejudiced, in such matters. And religiously-minded people, being human like everyone else, are oftentimes inclined to attribute to their prayers only the good results they feel they obtain from the practice. The common tendency is, while taking credit for the blessings, to *charge off* parallel tragedies, to lay the evils of life at the feet of Satan or some other outside antagonistic force. Would our Christian brothers, all of whom are parts of ourselves, and on whom no judgment is passed, feel themselves abused if asked to consider the possibility that some of the tragedies which they and their friends and relations experience, may likewise be correlated with prayer—sincere, though in this case, ignorantly-directed, prayer? "More things are wrought by prayer," said Tennyson, "than the world dreams of."

(*To be concluded*)

THE GOSPELS ON PRAYER

AND when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward.

But thou, *when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret;* and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly. (Matt. 6: 5-6.)

And when he had sent the multitudes away, *he went up into a mountain apart to pray*: and when the evening was come *he was there alone.* (Matt. 14: 23.)

Then cometh Jesus with them unto a place called Gethsemane, and saith unto the disciples, *Sit ye here* [*wait here*], *while I go and pray yonder* [*alone*].

And he took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be sorrowful and very heavy.

Then saith he unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here [wait here], and watch with me.

And *he went a little farther* [*off by himself*] *and fell on his face, and prayed. . . .*

And he cometh unto the disciples, and findeth them asleep. . . . (Matt. 26: 36-40.)

He went away [*off to himself*] again the second time, *and prayed. . . .*

And he came and found them [the disciples] asleep again: for their eyes were heavy.

And he left them, and *went away* [*by himself*] again, *and prayed* the third time, saying the same words. (Matt. 26: 42-44.)

And in the morning, rising up a great while before day, *he went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed.*

And Simon and they that were with him followed after him.

NOTE.—In these quotations from the King James version of the Bible, all italics are ours. —Editors.

And when they had found him, they said unto him, All men seek for thee. (Mark 1: 35-37.)

And *when he had sent them* (*the people*) *away,* [that is, *when he was alone*] he departed into a mountain to pray. (Mark 6: 46.)

. . . and great multitudes came together to hear, and to be healed by him of their infirmities.

And *he withdrew himself into the wilderness,* [*where he could be alone*] and prayed. (Luke 5: 15-16.)

And it came to pass in those days, that *he went out* [*alone*] *into a mountain to pray,* and continued all night in prayer to God.

And when it was day, he called unto him his disciples (for they had not been with him while he prayed). (Luke 6: 12-13.)

. . . he took Peter and John and James, and went up into a mountain to pray.

And as he prayed, the fashion of his countenance was altered, and his raiment was white and glistening.

And, behold, there talked with him two men, which were Moses and Elias: Who appeared in glory, and spake of his decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem.

But *Peter and they that were with him were heavy with sleep* [*Jesus prayed alone while the disciples slept*]: and when they were awake, they saw his glory, and the two men that stood with him. (Luke 9: 28-32.)

And it came to pass, *as he was alone praying,* his disciples were with him: and he asked them, saying, Whom say the people that I am?

They answering said, John the Baptist; but some say, Elias; and others say, that one of the old prophets is risen [re-incarnated] again. (Luke 9: 18-19.)

And it came to pass, that, *as he was praying in a certain place* [*alone?*], when he ceased, one of the disciples said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples. (Luke 11: 1.) [Then follows the Lord's Prayer which, note well, is not an actual prayer made at the time, but is Jesus' instructions to his disciples, a "manner" of praying (as stated in Matt. 6: 9.)]

And he came out, and went, as he was wont, to the mount of Olives: and his disciples also followed him.

And when he was at the place, he said unto them, Pray that ye enter not into temptation.

And *he was withdrawn from them about a stone's cast, and kneeled down, and prayed.* (Luke 22: 39-41.)

And *when he rose up from prayer, and was come to his disciples* [*for he had been alone while he prayed*], *he found them sleeping* for sorrow . . . (Luke 22. 45.)

Then there were brought unto him little children, that he *should put his hands on them, and pray*: and the disciples rebuked them.

But Jesus said, Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven.

And he laid his hands on them, and departed thence. (Matt. 19: 13-15.) [But *he did not pray, as had been requested.*]

Devotion Beyond Prayer

Some devotees give sacrifice to the Gods, while others, lighting the subtler fire of the Supreme Spirit offer themselves; still others make sacrifice with the senses, beginning with hearing, in the fire of self-restraint, and some give up all sense-delighting sounds, and others again, illuminated by spiritual knowledge, sacrifice all the functions of the senses and vitality in the fire of devotion through self-constraint. There are also those who perform sacrifice by wealth given in alms, by mortification, by devotion, and by silent study.

O harasser of thy foes, the sacrifice through spiritual knowledge is superior to sacrifice made with material things; every action without exception is comprehended in spiritual knowledge, O son of Pritha.

—*Bhagavad-Gita*

YOUTH-COMPANIONS ASK— AND ANSWER

FOR all their differences, both Plato and Aristotle agree that the fine arts are primarily imitative of nature, in one way or another. If our function in life is to come to grips with "reality," and thus to grow in knowledge of all departments of nature, what legitimate place has æsthetics, which is apparently concerned with mere imitations of "real life"?

It is true that almost all art of the fourth century B.C., when Plato and Aristotle were teaching, as well as most art since then, has been largely imitative of objects and situations found in the physical world. Since H.P.B. tells us that all books (and perhaps we may include the other types of artistic expression as well) are "inferior to the book of nature," it does indeed seem valid to ask why those other books should be written at all. Plato, in *The Republic,* is especially devastating in his consideration of the arts. Very few of the forms of poetry and music extant in his time were to be allowed in the hypothetical utopia. Yet one must be extremely careful when reading Plato, for he means more than he says, and while he condemns most of the artistic expressions of his age as perverting the minds of the young and polluting the understanding of those who do not have the antidote—"knowledge of their real nature"—he nevertheless employs literary allusions and poetical metaphors throughout the work, and indeed at the end, with the myth of Er, is transformed from Plato the philosopher and teacher into Plato the poet.

Perhaps some light may be thrown on this paradox by a consideration of what Plato means by "reality," or "that which really is." In his illustration of the divided line, he says that all life may be divided into two categories, the visible and the intelligible. Breaking his line down further, he states that the visible part of nature is itself twofold: images (including "firstly shadows, secondly, reflections in water, and in things that are close-grained, smooth, and bright"); and solid physical objects (animals, trees, etc.). The intelligible segment is divided first into hypotheses (the realm of scientific speculation) and second into the realm of primal Forms, which alone the philosophical mind can grasp in its search of "the first principle of everything." To move along this line

is to grow from ignorance (or imagining) to belief, to understanding, and finally, to "intelligence" (or true knowledge). It is also to move from illusion to reality; and hence, to the degree that art is merely imitation of physical forms, it is at the bottom of the line, and far indeed from any contact with ultimate realities. Yet Plato himself becomes poetical: Glaucon compares Socrates with a sculptor, and even life itself is constantly being described in terms of pattern, form, and beauty. Indeed, Plato calls blind those men who have no "knowledge of that which really is, who have no distinct pattern in their soul, and cannot look away, like painters, to the perfect truth, and contemplate the standard they have yonder with the greatest care. . . ." It seems clear from the foregoing that there is more than one level of artistic achievement, and that among the highest arts is that of living a well-ordered life.

However, do not these considerations leave what we know as æsthetics in a rather bad light? Perhaps not, especially when we consider that Plato is speaking of a golden age. At present, he tells us, we are living in the state of Inflammation, and in this state great art, especially as it attempts to capture the spirit behind the forms, may very well be necessary as a guide and inspiration to our otherwise brutal and materialistic civilization. The true artist must employ intuition as well as craftsmanship, and to the degree that he is able to capture those intuitions in his creation, he has brought soul into expression, and has elevated all of life. Speaking of music, H.P.B. says (*Isis* II, 411): "Harmonious rhythm, a melody vibrating softly in the atmosphere, creates a beneficent and sweet influence around, and acts most powerfully on the psychological as well as physical natures of every living thing on earth; it reacts even on inanimate objects, for matter is still spirit in its essence, invisible as it may seem to our grosser senses."

In our present age of intellect, when we tend to banter about a jumble of half-formed concepts, and weigh down our minds in a confusing morass of words, we may come upon a great and simple work of art, and if it gets past our intellect—that is, if it really gets through to us—we will be silent and become aware of a "new" realm of sensibility unfolding within us. Confrontation with great art cuts across our intellectualizations, and evokes a flash of soul recognition. H.P.B. tells us that "the innate powers of the soul must be highly developed" in order to read the "book of nature." It would seem that one way those powers

may be developed is through the artistic effort, the attempt to bring order and beauty out of seeming chaos.

Nature is a book, that is to say, a work of art; and so it would seem that the artist does not create beauty where there was none before, but rather finds it, captures it for his fellow men to see. As Alexander Pope says:

> All Nature is but Art, unknown to thee;
> All Chance, Direction, which thou canst not see;
> All Discord, Harmony not understood;
> All partial Evil, universal Good.

In this sense, the artist serves as educator of mankind, pointing out relationship and beauty where less sharp eyes see none. Plato, too, considered nature a work of art, but in the sense that the physical world is a copy, a mimesis, of Forms "laid up" in higher planes of being. Our world is the "image" of reality, and when man has ordered his being properly, there will be a true correspondence between the spiritual and physical, an undistorted reflection of higher to lower, a universal harmony.

In short, as æsthetics is implicit in nature, so it is natural to man. The spirit of man is creator, and must create.

And yet it is also true, as Goethe says, that "truth in Nature and truth in Art are quite different things and the artist should in no way strive to make his creation seem to be a work of nature." In support of this view, Goethe tells the story of a monkey who ate all the realistically drawn beetles in a natural science textbook. "You wouldn't place these colored engravings of beetles on a par with the picture of the great master, would you?" he asks. According to Goethe, "an artist lowers himself if he aims only at achieving this effect." Here he is in perfect agreement with Plato, that mere imitation of physical objects has little "real" value. And yet, somewhat paradoxically, Goethe admits that "a great work of art also seems to be a work of nature." He explains as follows:

> Because it appeals to your higher nature, because it is supra-natural but not "extra-natural." A perfect work of art is a product of the human spirit and in this sense it is also a work of nature. But to the extent that separate parts are brought together in a unified whole, wherein the most minute and ordinary objects are given meaning and dignity, the work is greater than nature. . . . The true amateur sees not only the truth of the objects presented, but also the superior qualities of

> what has been chosen, the cleverness with which they have been fitted together, the supra-natural qualities of a little world of art; he feels that he must lift himself to the point of view of the artist in order to enjoy the work; he feels that he must compose his distracted life, live with and come to know a work of art, regard it frequently, and thereby heighten the value and quality of his own existence.

Æsthetics, then, helps man tap his dormant power of intuition, a power which must become fully developed during our evolutionary progress, and which alone permits man to gain communion with the Real—the Self of All.

A People's Art-Language

To the profane, a people's art is a language as unintelligible as a foreign tongue. It cannot be judged inferior because we cannot understand it. It is generally composed of elements and conventions with some sort of meaning; magic or religious, simple formulas to represent ideas, motivated, however, by an aesthetic urge. The more complex the culture, the more dominant the aesthetic elements become, until they overshadow their symbolic or useful purpose.

Two basic and totally opposite tendencies in art strongly influence our appreciation: one, which we can understand and accept readily, is the naturalistic representation of men, animals, and so forth, in which the artist delights in the deliberate and controlled re-creation of the forms of nature; the other, more difficult to grasp, is symbolical representation, in which he takes liberties with nature and often reduces the subjects of nature or parts of them for symbolical or decorative purposes until all resemblance to the original model is lost. It is clear that this tendency is in many cases a deliberate intention to create a secret code expressing ideas that should be kept from the uninitiated.

—Miguel Covarrubias

THE LAW OF REBIRTH

IF we would simplify our presentation of theosophical items we might refer to the Law of Rebirth as our list of unfinished business. If, in the course of one lifetime, we could leave the scene with all our accounts settled, with all our causes ripened into their effects, and could enter life in the body with no unexpended causes accompanying us, there would be no need for reincarnation. Likewise, there would be no reason for being born—or for living. Cause and effect, in *endless* succession, is the process of living, of learning, and of making natural and proper use of the knowledge gained through living and learning.

"Never will I seek nor receive private, individual salvation," is not a popular idea in the world of anthropomorphic religions whose devotees are encouraged to seek such salvation, but the quoted statement and the context in which it appears refer to the *fact* of natural brotherhood which no amount of popular belief, no matter by whom held or by whom preached, can ever offset or overthrow.

In our everyday life of human, bodily existence we are well aware that we experience each day the consequences of actions started yesterday, last week, last year, ten years ago, and as far back as we can trace the causes. We should also be willing to admit that many of the effects which reach us and whose causes we cannot trace could only reach us because of our relationship with the causes; to think otherwise would be equivalent to charging Natural Law with injustice, or failing to recognize the operation of Law in everything and in every circumstance. And, if we can see in retrospect our chain of cause-and-effect in the past, we should be able to project the causes into the future and in some degree foresee their effects as happening tomorrow, next week, next year or ten years hence—or ten incarnations hence. (To do this, of course, we must fully realize that the Law of Rebirth operates incessantly and has no exceptions.) And while we are relating these causes and effects to each other, we are involved in a much greater number of causes and effects which we fail to recognize unless Theosophy has had its way with us. This point has been labored so much in theosophical presentations that its repetition might seem tiresome, yet most, if not all, our learning has been accomplished by repetition, *including repeated lives on earth.* Making, as we are frequently obliged to do, a comparison between the teach-

ings of Theosophy and the creeds of religion, we might say that Theosophy offers *pure logic*, which appeals to native reason, while religion demands emotional belief, which stultifies reason.

All that is cognized by the physical senses we now possess is temporary and impermanent, and we can fully accept the testimony of our senses only in regard to mundane things and affairs, and then only in limited aspects. When we have truly learned to think, live, and act as continuing, responsible entities we will develop the other senses through which we will perform the functions which accompany such development. The experiences we pass through and the records they make on our physical brain and personal mind are erased with the death of the person, just as old lessons are erased from the schoolroom blackboard to make way for new ones. But the *effects* of the lessons learned remain in the imperishable part of our nature, the reincarnating ego, the real man, as distinguished from the series of personalities he uses to gain experience.

If we can verify the chain of cause-and-effect in our daily lives, we can use that verification as an index to the greater aspect of the same—then view a series of our lives in which our experiences and relationships have prepared us for further experience, expansion, and understanding. We are, as students of theosophy, interested in that aspect of Universal Deity which each of us *is*. And it is in the continuity of experience and of fundamental identity, as processed by reincarnation, that our awareness is increased. To better comprehend this we should try to realize that rebirth is as much a necessary process as our awakening tomorrow after tonight's sleep, the only difference between the two processes being that throughout sleep we retain the *personal* consciousness, whereas in the after-death states we keep our personal identity only through the devachanic state. The personality has no memory of the experiences of the previous person, but is yet overshadowed and guided by its real self or ego, the true keeper and balancer of accounts.

It is through such guidance that we complete any particular series of causes and effects and build new series leading to greater understanding. It is through such guidance that we may constructively enter or leave or re-enter relationships with human and other beings, places, and things. The Law of Rebirth is absolute and without exception and through it we learn, willingly, if we try to conform to law, or unwillingly, if we rebel against natural law, but learning always.

THE DIVINE ILLUSIVE POWER

Maya is the perceptive faculty of every Ego which considers itself a Unit, separate from and independent of the One Infinite Eternal Sat or "be-ness."

—H. P. BLAVATSKY

MAYA, or Illusion, is the cosmic power which renders phenomenal existence, and perception thereof, possible. In Hindu philosophy that alone which is changeless and eternal is called *reality;* all that is subject to change through decay and differentiation and which has therefore a beginning and an end, is regarded as *maya*—illusion.

Everything that is finite is illusion, all that is eternal and infinite is reality. Form, color, that which we hear and feel, or see with our mortal eyes, exists only so far as it can be conveyed to us through our senses. The universe for a man born blind does not exist in either form or color, but it exists in its *privation* (in the Aristotelian sense), and is a reality for the spiritual senses of the blind man. We all live under the powerful dominion of phantasy. Alone the highest and invisible *originals* emanated from the thought of the Unknown are real and permanent beings, forms, and ideas. On earth, we see but their reflections, more or less correct, and ever dependent on the physical and mental organization of the person who beholds them.

Whatever plane our consciousness may be acting in, both we and things belonging to that plane are, for the time being, our only realities. As we rise in the scale of development we perceive that during the stages through which we have passed we mistook shadows for realities, and the upward progress of the Ego is a series of progressive awakenings, each advance bringing with it the idea that now, at last, we have reached "reality." But only when we shall have reached the absolute Consciousness, and blended our own with it, shall we be free from the delusions produced by Maya. The reader must bear in mind that, according to our teaching which regards this phenomenal Universe as a great *illusion,* the nearer a body is to the UNKNOWN SUBSTANCE, the more it approaches *reality,* as being removed the farther from this world of Maya. Esoteric philosophy, regarding as Maya (or the illusion of ignorance) every finite thing, must necessarily view in the same light

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NOTE.—Collated from the writings of H. P. Blavatsky.

every intra-Cosmic planet and body, as being something organized, hence finite.

Says Hermes: "Reality is not upon the earth, my son, and it cannot be thereon. . . . Nothing on earth is real, there are only appearances. He (man) is not real, my son, as man. The real consists solely in itself and remains what it is. Man is transient, therefore he is not real, he is but appearance, and appearance is the supreme illusion." Tatios questions: "Then the celestial bodies themselves are not real, my father, since they also vary?" Trismegistos: "That which is subject to birth and to change is not real. . . . There is in them a certain falsity, seeing that they too are variable." For, whether one calls the genii of Hermes and his "Gods" —"Powers of Darkness" and "Angels," as in the Greek and Latin Churches; or "Spirits of the Dead," as in Spiritualism; or, again, *Bhoots* and *Devas, Shaitan* or *Djin,* as they are still called in India and Mussulman countries—*they are all one and the same thing*—ILLUSION.

According to the tenets of Eastern Occultism, DARKNESS is the one true actuality, the basis and the root of light, without which the latter could never manifest itself, nor even exist. Light is matter, and Darkness pure Spirit. Darkness, in its radical, metaphysical basis, is subjective and absolute light; while the latter in all its seeming glory and effulgence, is merely a mass of shadows, as it can never be eternal, and is simply an illusion, or Maya.

A people brought up and nurtured for countless ages among all the psychological phenomena of which the civilized (!) nations read, but reject as incredible and worthless, cannot well expect to have its religious system even understood, let alone appreciated. The profoundest and most transcendental speculations of the ancient metaphysicians of India and other countries, are all based on the great Buddhistic and Brahmanical principle underlying the whole of their religious metaphysics—*illusion* of the senses. From the standpoint of the highest metaphysics, the whole Universe, gods included, is an illusion; but the illusion of him who is in himself an illusion *differs on every plane* of consciousness, and we have no more right to dogmatize on, say, the sixth plane, than we have to identify our perceptions with, or make them a standard for, those of an ant, in *its* modes of consciousness. The pure object apart from consciousness is unknown to us, while living on the plane of our three-dimensional world; as we know only the mental states it excites in the perceiving Ego.

It is not in the dead letter of Buddhistical sacred literature that scholars may hope to find the true solution of its metaphysical subtleties. The latter weary the power of thought by the inconceivable profundity of its ratiocination; and the student is never farther from the truth than when he believes himself nearer its discovery. The mastery of every doctrine of the perplexing Buddhist system can be attained only by proceeding strictly according to the Pythagorean and Platonic method—from universals down to particulars. The key to it lies in the refined and mystical tenets of the spiritual influx of divine life. "Whoever is unacquainted with my law," says Buddha, "and dies in that state, must return to earth till he becomes a perfect Samanean. To achieve this object, he must destroy within himself the trinity of Maya. He must extinguish his passions, unite and identify himself with *the law* (the teaching of the secret doctrine), and comprehend the religion of *annihilation*." Here, annihilation refers but to matter, however sublimated.

Spirit is matter *on the seventh plane;* matter is Spirit on the lowest point of its cyclic activity; and both are Maya.

The fundamental Law in the Occult system, the central point from which all emerged, around and toward which all gravitates, and upon which is hung the philosophy of all the rest, is the One homogeneous divine SUBSTANCE-PRINCIPLE, the one radical cause. It is called "Substance-Principle," for it becomes substance on the plane of the manifested Universe, an illusion, while it remains a principle in the beginningless and endless abstract, visible and invisible SPACE. Its impersonality is the fundamental conception of the System. It is latent in every atom in the Universe, and is the Universe itself. During the great mystery and drama known as the Manvantara, real Kosmos is like the object placed behind the white screen upon which are thrown the Chinese shadows, called forth by the magic lantern. The actual figures and things remain invisible, while the wires of evolution are pulled by the unseen hands; and men and things are thus but the reflections, *on* the white field, of the realities *behind* the snares of *Mahamaya*, or the great Illusion. This was taught in every philosophy, in every religion *ante* as well as *post* diluvian, in India and Chaldea, by the Chinese as by the Grecian Sages.

This world is the symbol (objective) of the ONE divided into the many, on the planes of Illusion, of Adi (the "First") or of Eka (the "One"); and this One is the collective aggregate, or totality, of the

principal Creators or Architects of this visible universe. In Occultist metaphysics there are, properly speaking, two "Ones"—the One on the unreachable plane of Absoluteness and Infinity, on which no speculation is possible, and the Second "One" on the plane of Emanations. The former can neither emanate nor be divided, as it is eternal, absolute, and immutable. The Second, being, so to speak, the reflection of the first One (for it is the Logos, or Eswara, in the Universe of Illusion), can do all this. It emanates from itself—as the upper Sephirothal Triad emanates the lower seven Sephiroth—the seven Rays or Dhyan Chohans; in other words, the Homogeneous becomes the Heterogeneous, the Protyle differentiates into the Elements. But these, unless they return into their primal Element, can never cross beyond the Laya, or zero point.

Everything that exists has only a relative, not an absolute, reality, since the appearance which the hidden *noumenon* assumes for any observer depends upon his power of cognition. To the untrained eye of the savage, a painting is at first an unmeaning confusion of streaks and daubs of colour, while an educated eye sees instantly a face or a landscape. Nothing is permanent except the one hidden absolute existence which contains in itself the noumena of all realities. The existences belonging to every plane of being, up to the highest Dhyan Chohans, are, in degree, of the nature of shadows cast by a magic lantern on a colorless screen; but all things are relatively real, for the cognizer is also a reflection, and the things cognized are therefore as real to him as himself. Whatever reality things possess must be looked for in them before or after they have passed like a flash through the material world; but we cannot cognize any such existence directly, so long as we have sense-instruments which bring only material existence into the field of our consciousness.

Ages untold before our era, the Hindu mystic Kapila, who is considered by many scientists as a skeptic, because they judge him with their habitual superficiality, magnificently expressed this idea in the following terms. "Man (physical man) counts for so little, that hardly anything can demonstrate to him his proper existence and that of nature. Perhaps, that which we regard as the universe, and the divers beings which seem to compose it, have nothing real, and are but the product of continued illusion—maya—of our senses."

The true Buddhist, recognizing no personal god, nor any "Father" and "*Creator* of Heaven and Earth," still believes in an *absolute con-*

sciousness, "Adi-Buddha"; and the Buddhist philosopher *knows* that there are Planetary Spirits, the "Dhyan Chohans." But though he admits of "spiritual lives," yet, as they are temporary in eternity, even they, according to his philosophy, are "the *maya* of the *day,*" the illusion of a "day of Brahma," a short manvantara of 4 billion, 320 million years.

If the Dhyan Chohans and all the invisible Beings—the Seven Centers and their direct Emanations, the *minor* centers of Energy—are the direct reflex of the ONE Light, yet men are far removed from these, since the whole of the *visible* Kosmos consists of "self-produced beings, the creatures of Karma." Thus regarding a personal God "as only a gigantic shadow thrown upon the void of space by the imagination of ignorant men," they teach that only "two things are (objectively) eternal, namely *Akasha* and *Nirvana,*" and that these are ONE in reality, and but a *maya* when divided. Prakriti (Nature) is ever called *Maya,* illusion, and is doomed to disappear with the rest, the gods included, at the hour of the Pralaya.

The Causes of existence are not only the physical causes known to science, but the metaphysical causes, the chief of which is the *desire to exist,* an outcome of Nidana and Maya. This desire for a sentient life shows itself in everything, from an atom to a sun, and is a reflection of the Divine Thought propelled into objective existence, into a law that the Universe should exist. But one has to *remember* that in the Hindu philosophy every differentiated unit is such only through the cycles of Maya, being one in its essence with the Supreme or One Spirit. The objects of sense being ever delusive and fluctuating, cannot be a reality. SPIRIT alone is unchangeable, hence—alone is no illusion. This is pure Buddhist doctrine.

The impalpable atoms of gold scattered through the substance of a ton of auriferous quartz may be imperceptible to the naked eye of the miner, yet he knows that they are not only present there but that they alone give his quartz any appreciable value; and this relation of the gold to the quartz may faintly shadow forth that of the noumenon to the phenomenon. But the miner knows what the gold will look like when extracted from the quartz, whereas the common mortal can form no conception of the reality of things separated from the Maya which veils them, and in which they are hidden.

PROEM

VI

BEGINNING is both simple and exceedingly complex. "Beginning" is a peculiarly unrestricted term, with a qualifying implication: every *beginning* must necessarily have an *ending.* It is one of the "pairs of opposites"—the language of duality—requisite to treat of the Universe in its myriad manifestations, visible and unseen.

According to dictionary definition, "beginning" means the "starting point in space, time or action." In the context of the Proem to *The Secret Doctrine,* "beginning" is a *universal* beginning, an involvement of Space *and* Time *and* Action. In reality, these three are inseparably present in every phase of manifestation. *Space* is that mysterious PRINCIPLE which cannot be left out of any conception, nor conceived of by itself. *Time* marks the duration in space of any phenomenon—its beginning and end, its recurrence. *Action* occupies time in space. Action is by nature serial, or sequential. Each "action" begins a series of actions; each "reaction," itself a beginning of endless ramification, links past with future—binding and bound, through interdependent connectedness: the whole an endless *chain* of Life, an all-embracing *wheel* of Life, a boundless *ocean* of Life; universal, undivided, ceaseless ONE LIFE.

"Beginning" or "ending" or any intermediate phase must be contemplated within the concept of Unity:

> The radical unity of the ultimate essence of each constituent part of compounds in Nature—from Star to mineral Atom, from the highest Dhyan Chohan to the smallest infusoria, in the fullest acceptation of the term, and whether applied to the spiritual, intellectual, or physical worlds—this is the one fundamental law in Occult Science. (*S.D.* I, 120.)

What questions do we ask of the Universe about us? What came first?, we ask—and reveal innate recognition of an *order* in Time. Where did it come from?, we ask—and the deep mystery of *origin* in Space confronts us, for the least of things excites wonder—the *cause* unknown. What makes it as it is?, we ask. What makes it different from every other thing? Looking inward for analogy—whether of order, or origin, or distinguishing characteristics—we know there is no action without force of some kind, and that force within. "Every

external motion, act, gesture, whether voluntary or mechanical, organic or mental, is produced and preceded by *internal* feeling or emotion, will or volition, and thought or mind." *Beginning* is always imperceptible.

In the Archaic system the symbol of "beginning" is the Point. It is unique—a vitally meaningful abstraction, a fundamental focus for contemplation. In the context of the Proem, the Point has evocative power. The Soul's reminiscence is aroused, the divining power of the mind quickened.

The Point-symbol is utterly simple; its representations are manifold; its implications universal.

The first facet of this symbol's meaning (Proem, page 1) is in the "re-awakening of still slumbering Energy." What is the nature of that Energy? Who comprehends the silent might—the latent power—of the force that rives the rock? that upthrusts a mountain range? The binding power that holds the heavenly bodies in their course, the seas in measured rhythm? The magic working that shapes in secret the lotus leaf within the seed, and unfolds the petals of the perennial primrose?

This Energic *beginning* has its root literally in the Night of Time—the Pralaya of the Universe. "Before beginning" is the "indescribable" stage of the First Stanza from the Book of Dzyan—there is no action, no actor, nothing to be acted upon.

> ALONE THE ONE FORM OF EXISTENCE STRETCHED BOUNDLESS, INFINITE, CAUSELESS, IN DREAMLESS SLEEP; AND LIFE PULSATED UNCONSCIOUS IN UNIVERSAL SPACE, THROUGHOUT THAT ALL-PRESENCE WHICH IS SENSED BY THE OPENED EYE OF THE DANGMA.

Notably, the ancients spoke to the heart of man—the intuition. The analogy of "dreamless sleep" brings the indescribable abstraction within the experience of all men, for dreamless sleep is inescapable. It is the closest we may come to understanding the essential identity of the Upanishadic verse: "Here the father is father no more; nor the mother a mother; nor the worlds, worlds; here the scriptures are no longer scriptures; the thief is a thief no more; nor the murderer a murderer; nor the outcast an outcast; nor the baseborn, baseborn; the pilgrim is a pilgrim no longer, nor the saint a saint. For the Spirit of man is not followed by good, he is not followed by evil. For he has crossed all the sorrows of the heart."

H. P. Blavatsky, in a direct use of the simile of "dreamless sleep," bridges the gap philosophically:

> Dreamless sleep is one of the seven states of consciousness known in Oriental esotericism. In each of these states a different portion of the mind comes into action; or as a Vedantin would express it, the individual is conscious in a different plane of his being. The term "dreamless sleep," in this case is applied allegorically to the Universe to express a condition somewhat analogous to that state of consciousness in man, which, not being remembered in a waking state, seems a blank, just as the sleep of the mesmerised subject seems to him an unconscious blank when he returns to his normal condition, although he has been talking and acting as a conscious individual would. (*S.D.* I, 47.)

The importance of a true idea about intuition is relevant here, as H.P.B. points out in a footnote (I, 46):

> Dangma means a purified soul, one who has become a Jivanmukta, the highest adept, or rather a Mahatma so-called. His "opened eye" is the inner spiritual eye of the seer, and the faculty which manifests through it is not clairvoyance as ordinarily understood, *i.e.,* the power of seeing at a distance, but rather the faculty of spiritual intuition, through which direct and certain knowledge is obtainable. This faculty is intimately connected with the "third eye," which mythological tradition ascribes to certain races of men.

In the words of William Q. Judge:

> Whatever intuition is, it can only be cultivated by having the right mental poise, the right philosophy and the right ethics; and by giving the intuition scope, or chance, so that by many mistakes we at last arrive at a knowledge of how to use it.

The word Mahatma, W. Q. Judge explains in the *Ocean of Theosophy,* is composed of *Maha,* great, and *Atma,* soul, and means great soul. As all men are souls the distinction of the Mahatma lies in greatness. A similar distinction with regard to intuition is made by Robert Crosbie:

> Intuition means "Direct cognition and comprehension," without reasoning from premises to conclusions; it is a power that every human being has, either latent, or operative in some degree. . . . The perfection of this divine faculty can only be attained when the aspirant is neither attached to, nor disturbed by, any externalities whatever; and when he has that additional knowledge that living the higher life implants. A Master once wrote, "The more unselfishly one works for his fellow men and divests himself of the illusionary sense of personal isolation, the more he is free from Maya and the nearer he approaches Divinity."

It is left entirely to the "intuition and the higher faculties of the reader" to grasp the meaning, as far as he can, of the allegorical phrases used in the Second Stanza. Indeed, says H.P.B., it must be remembered that "all these Stanzas appeal to the inner faculties rather than to the ordinary comprehension of the physical brain." But the stage described in Stanza II is, to a Western mind, so nearly identical with that mentioned in the First Stanza, that to "express the idea of a difference would require a treatise in itself." For instance:

> THERE WAS NEITHER SILENCE, NOR SOUND. NAUGHT SAVE CEASELESS, ETERNAL BREATH (*Motion*) WHICH KNOWS ITSELF NOT.

This is Unconditioned Consciousness—without limitations or qualifications: nothing to be conscious of, nor anyone to be conscious of it. "Absolute Consciousness contains the cognizer, the thing cognized and the cognition, all three in itself and all three *one*."

One of the indistinguishable distinctions, perhaps, is that the "Breath" of the One Existence is "used in its application only to the spiritual aspect of Cosmogony by Archaic esotericism; otherwise, it is replaced by its equivalent in the material plane—Motion." Another subtle distinction in the Commentary is: "The Primordial Substance had not yet passed out of its precosmic latency into differentiated objectivity . . . But, as the hour strikes, it becomes receptive of the Fohatic impress of the Divine Thought."

These statements involve the language of duality—the vocabulary of the manifested Universe. The key to it is in the First Fundamental Proposition of *The Secret Doctrine*.

"The 'Manifested Universe' is pervaded by duality, which is, as it were, the very essence of its EX-istence as 'manifestation.' But just as the opposite poles of subject and object, spirit and matter, are but aspects of the One Unity, in which they are synthesized, so, in the manifested Universe, there is 'that' which links spirit to matter, subject to object.

"This something is called by the occultists Fohat. It is the 'bridge' by which 'Ideas' existing in the 'Divine Thought' are impressed on Cosmic substance as the 'laws of Nature.' Fohat is thus the dynamic energy of Cosmic Ideation; or, regarded from the other side, it is the intelligent medium, the guiding power of all manifestation. . . . Thus from Spirit, or Cosmic Ideation, comes our consciousness; from Cosmic

Substance the several vehicles in which that consciousness is individualised and attains to self—or reflective—consciousness; while Fohat, in its various manifestations, is the mysterious link between Mind and Matter, the animating principle electrifying every atom into life."

This is the stage of the Third Stanza. *The time has come* for "beginnings"—the "Re-awakening of the Universe to life after Pralaya":

> THE LAST VIBRATION OF THE SEVENTH ETERNITY THRILLS THROUGH INFINITUDE . . . .

The mystic division is accomplished: under the "eternal and changeless LAW which causes the great periods of Activity and Rest" there is the beginning of *time* within endless duration. There is the beginning of *activity*—the development of "limitless subjectivity into as limitless objectivity." The beginning of *awareness* for, "during the long night of rest called Pralaya, when all the existences are dissolved, the 'UNIVERSAL MIND' remains as a permanent possibility of mental action, or as that absolute abstract thought, of which mind is the concrete relative manifestation." (*S.D.* I, 38.)

This general idea is expressed by Wm. Q. Judge, in the *Ocean of Theosophy,* succinctly and in easily-remembered phrases: "Our knowledge begins with differentiation. The first differentiation—speaking metaphysically as to time—is Spirit, with which appears Matter and Mind."

. . . .

"The Deity is one, because It is infinite. It is triple, because it is ever manifesting."—say the Kabalists.

A POWER DIVINE

Behold, I show you Truth! Lower than hell,
Higher than heaven, outside the utmost stars,
Farther than Brahm doth dwell,

Before beginning, and without an end,
As space eternal and as surety sure,
Is fixed a Power divine which moves to good,
Only its laws endure.

—*The Light of Asia*

ON THE LOOKOUT

Keys to the Language of Myth

The appearance of Joseph Campbell's second volume of *The Masks of God,* subtitled *Oriental Mythology,* constitutes another impressive reminder that the most intuitive men of our time are becoming cognizant of a timeless "wisdom religion" underlying ancient myths and symbols. Many Theosophical students have found Dr. Campbell's *Hero with a Thousand Faces* an important link between central themes of *Isis Unveiled* and *The Secret Doctrine* and contemporary revaluations of primeval religious psychology, and as showing, also, a kinship between Erich Fromm's *The Forgotten Language* and Dr. Campbell's perspective. In Volume I of *The Secret Doctrine,* H. P. Blavatsky said what Dr. Campbell and Dr. Fromm are saying today, and the "secrets" of mythology are now seen to be directly relevant to the emergence of a *noëtic* psychological approach. H.P.B. suggests the Theosophical outlook by quoting Gerald Massey (*S.D.* I, 304):

> Mythology was a primitive mode of *thinking* the early thought. It was founded on natural facts, and is still verifiable in phenomena. There is nothing insane, nothing irrational in it, when considered in the light of evolution, and when its mode of expression by sign-language is thoroughly understood. The insanity lies in mistaking it for human history or Divine Revelation. Mythology is the repository of man's most ancient science, and what concerns us chiefly is this—when truly interpreted once more, it is destined to be the death of those false theologies to which it has unwittingly given birth.

Perspective on Religion

A paragraph in Dr. Campbell's *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* describes the "fall" of mythology into religious formula:

> In the later stages of many mythologies, the key images hide like needles in great haystacks of secondary anecdote and rationalization; for when a civilization has passed from a mythological to a secular point of view, the older images are no longer felt or quite approved.

As Campbell shows, the psychological tragedy of Christianity occurred when the great myth of the Christos, universal in its implications, was compressed into belief concerning a series of supposed historical events. Christ became a personal saviour, no longer the image

of a Christ-spirit in every man. Dr. Campbell continues:

> Wherever the poetry of myth is interpreted as biography, or science, it is killed. The living images become only remote facts of a distant time or sky. Furthermore, it is never difficult to demonstrate that as science and history mythology is absurd. When a civilization begins to reinterpret its mythology in this way, the life goes out of it, temples become museums, and the link between the two perspectives is dissolved. Such a blight has certainly descended on the Bible and on a great part of the Christian cult.
>
> To bring the images back to life, one has to seek, not interesting applications to modern affairs, but illuminating hints from the inspired past. When these are found, vast areas of half-dead iconography disclose again their permanently human meaning.

Eastern Philosophy and Western Religion

The first chapter in *Oriental Mythology* elaborates these points by comparing the profound philosophy implicit in the Eastern tradition and the provincial theology of orthodox Christendom. Concerning beliefs resulting from literal belief in the Bible, Dr. Campbell says: "The world is corrupt and man a sinner; the individual, however, through engagement along with God in the destiny of the only authorized community, participates in the coming glory of the kingdom of righteousness, when 'the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together'." He continues:

> In the experience and vision of India, on the other hand, although the holy mystery and power have been understood to be indeed transcendent, they are also, at the same time, immanent. It is not that the divine is every*where*: it is that the divine is every *thing*. So one does not require any outside reference, revelation, sacrament, or authorized community to return to it. One has but to alter one's psychological orientation and recognize (re-cognize) what is within. Deprived of this recognition, we are removed from our own reality by a cerebral shortsightedness which is called in Sanskrit *maya*.
>
> According to the biblical version, it was only after creation that man fell, whereas in the Indian example creation itself was a fall—the fragmentation of a god. And the god is not condemned. Rather, his creation, his "pouring forth," is described as an act of voluntary, dynamic will-to-be-more, which anteceded creation and has, therefore, a metaphysical, symbolical, not literal, historical meaning. The myth of the Self in the form of a man tells of an intrinsic, not errant, factor in the manifold of being, the correction or undoing of which would not improve, but dissolve, creation. The Indian point of view is metaphysical, poetical; the biblical, ethical and historical.

As H.P.B. put it in *Isis Unveiled* (I, 162): *There is a logos in every mythos,* or a ground-work of truth in every fiction.

THE PSYCHOLOGICAL SCHISM

In another chapter of *Oriental Mythology,* "The Cities of God," Dr. Campbell again seems to paraphrase a psychological evaluation of Christianity by H.P.B.:

> Following a period of common development in the nuclear Near East, the two branches of the Orient and Occident went apart and the "moments" (or, as I would say, "psychological stages") of their experiences of the holy also went apart. In the West, owing to the emphasis noted in our last chapter on the man/God dissociation, the agony was read as a divorce from God, largely in terms of guilt, punishment, and atonement; whereas in the Orient, where a sense of the immanence of divinity in all things remained, even though occluded by wrong judgment, the reading was psychological and the ways and imageries of release there have the character, consequently, rather of alternative therapies than of the authoritative directives of a supernatural father. When the Buddha extinguished ego in himself, the world burst into flower. But that, exactly, is the way it has always appeared to those in whom wonder—and not salvation—is religion.

INVITATION TO "THE SECRET DOCTRINE"

In the *Psychic Observer* for August 25, 1960, Grahame W. Barratt undertook to present the Three Fundamental Propositions of H. P. Blavatsky's *Secret Doctrine.* Now, in the March issue of a magazine called *The Searcher* (published by the Psychic Observer, Inc.), Mr. Barratt attempts to answer the question, "What is The Secret Doctrine?" His opening paragraphs amount to an explanation of why students in ULT study classes—working consistently from the basis of the Three Fundamental Propositions of *The Secret Doctrine*—may find themselves at home in this book, even though never its "masters"; and why, also, on the other hand, so many would-be students of "occultism" never get beyond the dipping and dabbling stage. Mr. Barratt writes:

> Many who chance to pick up the book *The Secret Doctrine,* would probably scan a few pages, lift their eyes to merciful heaven, and put the thing down again with a gasp of intellectual suffocation.
>
> Such frustration need never happen.
>
> It is neither wise nor fair to dismiss the possibility of gaining what may well become the groundwork of the most fascinating study in the world. One meets the flippant ass and the kangaroo-intellectual airily

claiming to be familiar with this monumental work on Occultism, yet when buttonholed and cornered, such types are soon deflated by their ignorance of its three fundamental propositions.

From "Opinion to Illumination"

The use of *The Secret Doctrine* should certainly be for *study,* a full exercise of one's highest capacity and intellectual perspective. But Mr. Barratt is also aware that this approach is mainly preparatory to a "deepening" effort involving reflection. It is as if the intellect prepares the way for an incarnation of intuition, and when this time for reflection arrives, the psychological relevance of many hitherto apparently obscure elements in *The Secret Doctrine* becomes clear. As Mr. Barratt puts it:

> *The Secret Doctrine* ends as a mere readable book; one steps, as it were, into the active function of this formula, into the conscious process of Nature about us. The humblest person will find that he can benefit even in the shallows of this vast ocean of natural knowledge; the learned and the strong may immerse themselves in depths which no book of the mysterious East itself can approach—much less rival.
>
> The sole "authority" and court of appeal is the sovereign intuition within; nothing real or true is ever based on personality.

This writer makes it plain that he in no sense considers *The Secret Doctrine* a casual work or a mere compilation, and for this reason he criticizes the efforts of some misguided students of H.P.B. to improve the original text by a "revised" edition in 1893:

> There was an imagined act of service to H. P. Blavatsky, by the reissue of *The Secret Doctrine* more in keeping with educated literary taste! The third and revised edition of 1893 is marred by thousands of alterations; some trivial, some which are actual corruptions of the original text. This is surely literary vandalism, even though the culprits felt justified in "improving" the peculiar style.
>
> This is mentioned for a specific reason. Occult modes of writing are designed to evoke certain effects in the reader; therefore, a brilliant sentence in well-tailored words may be an actual menace if the vandal is not aware of the psychological obscuration he may be causing. . . . The precious doctrine remains; therefore, the student is advised to obtain the photographic reproduction of the original work, which is bound as one volume.

"Ever Incomparable"

Mr. Barratt closes "What is The Secret Doctrine?" by speaking of H. P. Blavatsky herself, which suggests that it is impossible to study Theosophy by way of worship of a "person":

> To seek the fascinating H.P.B. as a *personality* is a worldly waste of time, for the real Initiate mind behind this mask alone challenges the very core of our modern learning and self-sufficiency. One marvels at the fact that this Titan soul in a Russian body from Ekaterinburg hardly knew English until she was 43!
>
> She baffled the greatest minds of her day and still continues to baffle their heirs. The writer pictures her as a giant, surrounded by a band of pipsqueaks who returned for her great occult knowledge a sad mixture of devotion and treachery. Her forthright honesty made her incapable of facing dissimulation in others; it was the hallmark of her genius as the ever-incomparable H.P.B.

"Life and Death" Anthology

An appreciative review of *Reincarnation: An East-West Anthology*, by Robert Kirsch, appearing in the Los Angeles *Times* for April 13, employs the foregoing quoted words in a prominent heading. Mr. Kirsch is clearly impressed by the tone of this Julian Press volume, now also distributed by Theosophy Company, observing that attempts to "prove" the theory of rebirth by either statistics of recall or experimentation is far less important than the areas of profound reflection to which the consideration of the philosophy of reincarnation inevitably lead. Such reflection, in Mr. Kirsch's words, "goes far beyond the area of belief or disbelief" and constitutes "an exploration of the meaning of life and death." Mr. Kirsch continues:

> Connected to the notion of reincarnation are cognate matters: immortality, soul, rebirth and pre-existence, the very essence of theology. The editors have brought together the writings of more than 400 great thinkers and the impressive quality of the volume is not whether it will prove or disprove the case, but rather the continuing concern with the problem right down to the rational and scientific present.

"Only Hasty Thinkers Will Reject"

Mr. Kirsch agrees with the editors of *An East-West Anthology* that "the real case for or against will rest on its capacity to provide a rational explanation of life and its mysteries, based upon the ascertainable laws of nature." The reviewer then indicates that, in terms of such an approach, even the confirmed skeptic may find food for reflective thought. He concludes the review with these passages:

> We have a tendency to distrust the mystical. I share it, I suppose with most of my contemporaries. But it is essential not to close our minds completely. This volume provides much more than an explora-

tion of the unknown. It is an opportunity to study and assess the response of poets, philosophers, scientists and religious leaders to one of the central issues of the human condition. We see readily that Jung, for example, bases much of his theory of racial memory on these ideas. Perhaps the best approach is that of Thomas Huxley:

"Like the doctrine of evolution itself, that of transmigration (or reincarnation) has its roots in the world of reality. None but very hasty thinkers will reject it on the ground of inherent absurdity."

A word on the book itself: the compilation reflects a careful and scholarly approach; the editing is done with a sense of obligation toward presenting a rounded and complete selection. Notes and introductions provide a useful intellectual and theoretical setting.

An Impressive Advertisement

The Julian Press, publishers of *Reincarnation: An East-West Anthology,* has evidently been warmed considerably by responses of distinguished thinkers to this volume. A costly spread appears as an advertisement of this volume in the New York *Times* Book Review section, probably amounting to the most thorough treatment the idea of reincarnation has ever received in a mere sales promotion. The appeal, of course, is chiefly popular, as it should be in such a medium, though many of the brief quotations concerning reincarnation—and on the book itself, from respected men of world reputation—suggest the depth and universality of the issues involved in the philosophy of rebirth. And since the Theosophical student feels that reincarnation has *universal* appeal, the presentations must also be regarded as educative:

Now you can *prove* you are not alone when you say "I believe in *reincarnation.*"

Why should you want to know about reincarnation—a subject which many imagine to be an oriental concept hostile to western belief and tradition?

Has sorrow, caused by the death of someone dearly loved, made you want to search for some proof, some rational explanation of life and its mysteries, for a higher meaning to existence?

Are you disturbed, as Dr. Erich Fromm says "the majority of the psychoanalyst's clientele are because they know that life runs out of their hands like sand, and that they will die without having lived?"

Every thoughtful person, who has ever pondered the mysteries of life—of the past, the present, the future and the eternal, needs this extraordinary book, the most extensive collection of reincarnation quotations ever published. If you have only wondered what Reincarnation truly means, here is the stimulating, challenging, and inspiring answer.

CURRENT NON-CONFORMIST TRENDS IN RUSSIA

If we remember that every attitude, every emotion, carries within itself the dynamics of its opposite, we will not be surprised at a growing nonconformist trend among Russians. Harrison Salisbury, in the New York *Times* for Feb. 7, notes this trend in science, religion, and fiction in the third of his five articles on contemporary Russia. He begins:

> Within the most advanced echelon of Soviet science there is emerging a tendency to seek a nonmaterialist, spiritual concept of the universe. This startling development within the élite corps of Soviet society is closely related to two collateral tendencies—a new and vigorous Communist party drive against religious beliefs and a reform move within the Russian Orthodox Church to adapt itself to the modern technological society.
>
> The fact that some of the most brilliant Soviet scientists suggest that there must exist in the universe a force or power that is superior to any possessed by man is said to have shocked conventionally minded Communist party functionaries.
>
> How widespread this tendency is cannot be established. Names are not being given. But there is reason to believe that some of the most eminent figures in the galaxy of Soviet physicists, astronomers and mathematicians are involved.

GOD—A SPIRITUAL PRINCIPLE?

Mr. Salisbury suggests that this attitude will not long be confined to the field of science. Already some of the younger Soviet novelists are expressing it in fictional form. One author put it in these words:

> I do not imagine God as He is depicted on icons. To me God is a sort of spiritual principle, the stimulus to the emergence of the galaxies, the stars, the planets and of everything which lives and reproduces on these planets, from the most elementary cells up to man.

Concurrent with this new attitude in the "high echelons of Soviet society," says the *Times* writer, is "a new movement within the Orthodox Church, strongly backed by the young priesthood." He continues:

> The new young, all in their late twenties or early thirties, are seeking to break the image of the Orthodox Church as a fortress of superstition and backwardness. They seek to develop an appeal to youth. They are aware of the tendencies emerging among men of science and they hope to adapt the church to the complexity of the modern world. Like ministers in Western churches, they wish to relate the church to the life of the community.

Party Reaction to Trends

According to Mr. Salisbury, the Soviet government is not taking these heretical trends lying down, but is employing "continuing tactics of harassment," especially toward those elements which have the strongest appeal to youth. For example:

> Newspapers of the Communist Youth League are constantly publishing articles denigrating the Baptists. They are charged with diverting young people from their studies, with primitive superstition, with financial and moral abuses and with just about any kind of accusation that comes into the mind of party agitators.

Yet it seems evident that the educational methods of the Soviet dialecticians, which, according to Franz Winkler, are "designed to close man's vision forever to the existence of a nonmaterial reality," are only partly successful.

Genius or Moron?

A strange combination of unusual ability in one direction and obscuration of practically all other faculties and capacities is found in a ten-year-old boy now at the Kentucky Training Home for the Mentally Retarded. (New York *Herald Tribune,* March 20.) Dr. Ashley Mixson, staff psychologist, says:

> Bobby is the most puzzling child I've ever come across. How can I explain a retarded child who can pick up a journal (American *Journal of Mental Deficiency*) from my desk and read from it perfectly? How can I explain Bobby when he can read from my French book and pronounce the words better than I can? and I took French in college.
>
> When Bobby arrived at the training home in 1957, all he could do was walk, sleep and read. And *read* . . . can you imagine that? But he couldn't feed or dress himself.

The article continues:

> The first inkling of Bobby's talent came when he was admitted to the home [although the parents had discovered that at the age of three he could read names from the telephone directory] when he read the superintendent's Latin diploma, and had no trouble with a simple German phrase written by Mr. Boland. Authorities say Bobby can read Latin, French, German, Spanish and Turkish, besides English. Last year he displayed a reading ability of a ninth grader, even though he was only nine years old.
>
> Bobby's future? It is a mystery, the authorities say, just as are his present talents.

HOW EXPLAIN THIS CONDITION?

It is possible that Bobby's brain was injured at birth (Caesarean section), which might explain the abnormal contrast between unusual ability in an otherwise subnormal child. Another possibility is suggested by the following from H. P. Blavatsky's article, "Genius":

> Great Genius, if true and innate, and not merely an abnormal expansion of our human intellect—can never copy or condescend to imitate, but will ever be original, *sui generis* in its creative impulses and realizations. . . . On the other hand artificial genius, so often confused with the former, and which, in truth, is but the outcome of long studies and training, will never be more than, so to say, the flame of a lamp burning outside the portal of the fane; it may throw a long trail of light across the road, but it leaves the inside of the building in darkness. And, as every faculty and property in Nature is dual—*i.e.*, each may be made to serve two ends, evil as well as good—so will artificial genius betray itself. Born out of the chaos of terrestrial sensations, of perceptive and retentive faculties, yet of finite memory, it will ever remain the slave of its body; and that body, owing to its unreliability and the natural tendency of matter to confusion, will not fail to lead even the greatest *genius,* so called, back into its own primordial element, which is chaos again, or *evil,* or earth. . . . Moreover such genius is always apt to lead to the extremes of weal or woe him through whom this artificial light of the terrestrial mind manifests. (THEOS. 41:167.)

END-OF-DAY FATIGUE

Julius Sumner Miller, El Camino College physicist, suggests the reason for tiredness at the end of day (Los Angeles *Times,* March 15). He says:

> The average person has 3,000 sq. in. of exposed surface. Atmospheric pressure at sea level is 15 lb. per square inch. Ergo, a person has 45,000 lb., a formidable load, pressing down on him. Fortunately this pressure is compensated by a person's internal pressure.

Mr. Judge, however, discussing fatigue in *Echoes from the Orient,* gives the following explanation:

> The most usual explanation for the phenomenon of sleep is that the body becomes tired and more or less depleted of its vitality and then seeks repose. This, says Theosophy, is just the opposite of the truth, for, instead of having suffered a loss of vitality, the body, at the conclusion of the day, has more life in it than when it waked. During the waking state the life-waves rush into the body with greater intensity every hour, and, we being unable to resist them any longer than the period usually observed, they overpower us and we fall asleep.